



# About the National Transportation Safety Board

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## Mission

The mission of the National Transportation Safety Board is to promote transportation safety through:

- Maintaining our congressionally mandated independence and objectivity
- Conducting objective, precise accident investigations and safety studies
- Performing fair and objective airman and mariner certification appeals
- Advocating and promoting safety recommendation
- Assisting victims of transportation accidents and their families

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged with determining the probable cause of transportation accidents, promoting transportation safety, and assisting victims of transportation accidents and their families.

## The Board

The NTSB has five Board Members, each nominated by the President and confirmed by the Senate to serve 5-year terms. A Member is designated by the President as Chairman and another as Vice Chairman for 2-year terms. The Chairmanship requires separate Senate confirmation. The current Members of the National Transportation Safety Board are:

- **Deborah A. P. Hersman, Chairman**  
Sworn in as the 12th Chairman on July 28, 2009, and re-nominated in 2011 to a second term. Her term as a Member began June 21, 2004, and her current Board membership and chairmanship term will expire on December 31, 2013. During her tenure at the Board, she has been the Member on the scene of 19 major transportation accidents. Before joining the Board, Chairman Hersman was responsible for a number of transportation issues, including her involvement in passage of the Motor Carrier Safety Improvement Act of 1999, the Pipeline Safety Improvement Act of 2002, and numerous other transportation safety and security measures. She holds a Master of Science degree in Conflict Analysis and Resolution, and both professional and technical transportation qualifications that include a commercial drivers license with multiple endorsements.
- **Christopher A. Hart, Vice Chairman**  
Sworn in as a Member on August 12, 2009, with a two-year term as Vice Chairman, his current Membership term expires on December 31, 2012. Member Hart has a long career in transportation safety, including a previous term as a Member of the NTSB from 1990 to 1993, FAA Deputy Director for Air Traffic Safety Oversight, FAA Assistant Administrator for the Office of System Safety, and Deputy Administrator of the NHTSA. He is a member of the District of Columbia Bar and the Lawyer-Pilots Bar Association, as well as being a licensed pilot with commercial, multi-engine and instrument ratings.

- **Robert L. Sumwalt**

Sworn in on August 21, 2006, and Vice Chairman until August 2008, with a current Membership term that will expire December 31, 2011. Prior to joining the NTSB, Member Sumwalt was the Manager of Aviation for a Fortune 500 company and has been a pilot for more than 32 years, including 24 years as an airline captain, airline check airman, instructor pilot and air safety representative. He has over 85 published aviation articles and papers, has been faculty at the USC Aviation Safety and Security Program, received the Flight Safety Foundation's Laura Taber Barbour Award in 2003 and ALPA's Air Safety Award in 2005. Since joining the Board, Member Sumwalt has served as the Chairman of the Board of Inquiry for many NTSB public hearings, forums, and has served as the Member on-scene for numerous accident investigations.

- **Mark R. Rosekind, PhD**

Sworn in on June 30, 2010, to a term that will currently expire December 31, 2014. Member Rosekind was the President and Chief Scientist of a scientific consulting firm that specializes in fatigue management. He has a long and distinguished career involved in aviation and space research, having risen to Chief of the Aviation Operations Branch in the Flight Management and Human Factors Division at the NASA Ames Research Center, and as the Director of Stanford University Sleep Disorders and Research Center.

- **Earl F. Weener, PhD**

Sworn in on June 30, 2010, to a term that will currently expire December 31, 2015. Member Weener is a licensed pilot who has dedicated his entire career to the field of aviation safety. He has been a consultant and fellow for the Flight Safety Foundation, and held a series of positions with The Boeing Company, including three Chief Engineer positions. Member Weener has served as a general aviation flight instructor and as a Part 135 pilot. Among his awards are a 1994 Laurel Award from Aviation Week and Space Technology magazine and, in 2005, the Honeywell Bendix Trophy for Aviation Safety.

## History

The NTSB originated in the Air Commerce Act of 1926, in which the U.S. Congress charged the U.S. Department of Commerce with investigating the causes of aircraft accidents. Later, that responsibility was given to the Civil Aeronautics Board's Bureau of Aviation Safety, when it was created in 1940.

In 1967, Congress consolidated all transportation agencies into a new U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) and established the NTSB as an independent agency placed within the DOT for administrative purposes. In creating the NTSB, Congress envisioned that a single organization with a clearly defined mission could more effectively promote a higher level of safety in the transportation system than the individual modal agencies working separately. Since 1967, the NTSB has investigated accidents in the aviation, highway, marine, pipeline, and railroad modes, as well as accidents related to the transportation of hazardous materials.

In 1974, Congress reestablished the NTSB as a completely separate entity, outside the DOT, reasoning that *"...No federal agency can properly perform such (investigatory) functions unless it is totally separate and independent from any other ... agency of the United States."* Because the DOT has broad operational and regulatory responsibilities that affect the safety, adequacy, and efficiency of the transportation system, and transportation accidents may suggest deficiencies in that system, the NTSB's independence was deemed necessary for proper oversight. The NTSB, which has no authority to regulate, fund, or be directly involved in the operation of any mode of transportation, conducts investigations and makes recommendations from an objective viewpoint.

In 1996, Congress assigned the NTSB the additional responsibility of coordinating Federal assistance to families of aviation accident victims. While originally legislated to provide assistance following major

aviation accidents, the program has expanded to provide assistance in all modes of transportation on a case-by-case basis.

In 2000, the agency embarked on a major initiative to increase employee technical skills and make our investigative expertise more widely available to the transportation community by establishing the NTSB Academy. The George Washington University Virginia campus was selected as the Academy's home. The NTSB took occupancy of the new facility in August 2003. On October 1, 2006, the name of the NTSB Academy was changed to the NTSB Training Center to better reflect the internal training mission of the facility.

Since its inception, the NTSB has investigated more than 132,000 aviation accidents and thousands of surface transportation accidents.

On call 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, NTSB investigators travel throughout the country and to every corner of the world to investigate significant accidents and develop factual records and safety recommendations with one aim—to ensure that such accidents never happen again. The NTSB's Most Wanted List of Transportation Safety Improvements highlights safety-critical actions that DOT modal administrations, the USCG, and others need to take to help prevent accidents and save lives.

To date, the NTSB has issued over 13,000 safety recommendations to more than 2,500 recipients. Because the NTSB has no formal authority to regulate the transportation industry, our effectiveness depends on our reputation for conducting thorough, accurate, and independent investigations and for producing timely, well-considered recommendations to enhance transportation safety.

## Employment

The NTSB is an Equal Opportunity Employer and has approximately 400 employees located in its Headquarters in Washington, DC, and in regional field offices in Ashburn (VA), Atlanta (GA), Miami (FL), Chicago (IL), Denver (CO), Arlington (TX), Federal Way (WA), Anchorage (AL), and Gardena (CA). Our employees work in a variety of transportation, transportation related, and administrative support occupations such as Aerospace Engineer, Air Safety Investigator, Transportation Safety Specialist, Highway Accident Investigator, Human Performance Investigator, Human Resources Specialist, Attorney-Advisor, Contract Specialist, Writer-Editor and Information Technology Specialist, and more.

Our staff reflects our values and we urge all with a passion for transportation safety to consider joining our agency. Check the vacancy announcement to see if you are eligible to apply. Changes in the vacancy listings happen quickly so check often or subscribe to the NTSB Jobs RSS. (See <http://www.nts.gov/about/employment.html>) Human Resources office: (800) 573-0937 or (202) 314-6239

The NTSB utilizes USAJOBS.GOV as its recruitment web site. This site is a collaborative effort between the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and Federal agencies to provide an innovative Internet site that assists applicants in finding employment with the Federal government. Applicants must supply:

- A resume (submit via mail, fax, online, or as otherwise specified in the vacancy announcement)
- Other "Required Documents" if applicable (i.e., college transcripts, Notification of Personnel Action, SF-50/FSA-50, current annual performance appraisal (within 18 months), DD-214, etc.) as specified in the vacancy announcement
- Knowledge, Skills & Abilities (KSA's), statement or Online Assessment Questionnaire if specified in the vacancy announcement